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9. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) A system to manage electronic documents used/produced when performing jobs, comprising:
servers connected to a network and storing master attribute information relating to distribution targets of each document for jobs to be performed; and
a processor in communication with the servers via the network and storing in a storage unit electronic documents used/produced when performing the jobs and storing attribute information of the documents to manage distribution targets of the documents, retrieving the master attribute information of the documents from the servers, and updating the attribute information of each document responsive to a conflict between the attribute information of each document and the master attribute information.

REMARKS

Examiner interview was conducted on January 15, 2003.

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claim 1-9 are pending. Claims 1, 7, 8, and 9 are independent.

Claims 1, 7-9 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson (US Patent No. 5,553,289).

Claims 2-6 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Domen (US Patent No. 5,504,676).

Claims 1, 7, 8, and 9 have been amended, and, thus, claims 1-9 remain pending for reconsideration, which is requested.

No new matter has been added in this Amendment. The foregoing rejections are respectfully traversed.

DISTINCTIONS OF THE CLAIMED PRESENT INVENTION OVER THE PRIOR ART

In view of the January 15, 2003 Examiner interview, independent claims 1 and 7 are amended to further emphasize the distinguishing features of the claimed present invention. Otherwise, independent claims 8 and 9 are amended to improve claim recitation regarding "distribution targets." The present invention as recited in amended independent claims 1, 7, 8 and 9, using the recitation of claims 1 and 8 as an example, comprises:

Claim 1

... a plurality types of attribute information included in said documents through a communication network, the attribute information relating to distribution targets of each document for the jobs

...

determining ... whether the attribute information included in the document conflicts with the master attribute information to manage the distribution targets of the documents

Claim 8

a processor storing in a storage unit documents and job attribute information of the documents to manage distribution targets of the documents, retrieving master job attribute information of the documents from the information management system, determining whether the job attribute information of each document conflicts with the master job attribute information, and updating the job attribute information of each document when determined that the job attribute information of each document conflicts with the master job attribute information (emphasis added).

PRIOR ART

JOHNSON

In Johnson, a "distribution" means an email document to be distributed, which contains media, such as an image, audio, etc. Johnson, column 1, lines 39-52 and claim 1. Further, in Johnson, the attribute information relate to media types of an email. More particularly, Johnson's attribute information is an email classification, such as PRIVATE, URGENT, etc., based upon media type of the email, such as whether audio, text, etc. (Johnson, Abstract).

In Johnson the email classification by the attribute information is merely an information alert to the user or to the system to take specific action when disseminating the document to the

destination email addresses.

However, in the context of the present application claims, the term "distribution target" means who or what a document belongs to or can receive the document. Specifically, the present invention associates attribute information corresponding to a place issuing a job document with attribute information corresponding to a destination that can receive the job document. Accordingly, the issuing place and destination of the job document can be determined based on such association, and, further, if desired, the job document can be distributed appropriately based upon such association. Multimedia data can be a job document.

In the present invention "attribute information relating to distribution targets" (claim 1) covers a distribution object or a distribution source, such that an object or a source is in charge of or responsible for a job document (i.e., an object/source to which the document belongs). As an example, the job document can be distributed based upon the distribution target (source/object), such as an organization, a project, a region, email address, etc. Page 3, lines 3-5. For example, in case of multimedia data, the "attribute information relating to distribution targets" (claim 1) can be a designer, an investigator, an authorizing person, an issuance manager of the multimedia data, project information related to organization information as associated with information about a product the organization is in charge of, a person in charge of the project, work the organization is in charge of, etc.

Therefore, the present invention provides "attribute information of the documents to manage distribution targets of the documents" and "updating the attribute information of each document" from a master attribute information (claims 8 and 9). The present invention has a benefit of informing users in real-time of distribution target updates. However, Johnson's attribute information does not relate to or based upon the present invention's "distribution targets," because Johnson does not even modify or update email addresses, which can be a distribution target attribute information.

Dependent claims 2-6 (depending, either directly or indirectly, from claim 1) recite patentably distinguishing features of their own with respect to corporation organizational information as an example of "job attribute information to manage the distribution targets of the documents" and, further, are at least patentably distinguishing due to their dependencies from independent claim 1.

In view of the amendments and remarks presented above, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-9 and allowance of claims 1-9 is respectfully requested.

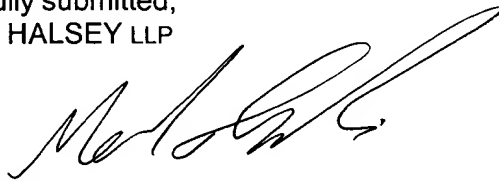
CONCLUSION

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "**Version with markings to show changes made.**"

If there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

Respectfully submitted,
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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1, 7, 8 and 9 are **AMENDED** as follows.

Recitation of pending claim is provided for reference convenience.

1. (FIVE TIMES AMENDED) A document management apparatus managing electronic documents used/produced when performing jobs by being connected to an information management device maintaining master attribute information for a plurality types of attribute information included in said documents through a communication network, the attribute information relating to distribution targets of each document for the jobs, said apparatus comprising:

a document storage section storing said documents;

a communication section acquiring information from a device connected to said communication network;

a determination section determining, for each document stored in said document storage section by reading out the master attribute information maintained by said information management device through said communication section, whether the attribute information included in the document conflicts with the master attribute information to manage the distribution targets of the documents; and

a rewriting section rewriting any of the attribute information included in the document when said determination section determines that the attribute information conflicts with the master attribute information.

2. (as FOUR TIMES AMENDED) A document apparatus according to claim 1, wherein each document comprises corporate organization codes as well as corporate organization names as the attribute information used to manage the distribution targets of each document;

said determination section determines that attribute information included in a document conflicts with the master attribute information in a case where the corporate organization codes included in said document are stored in the master attribute information but a combination of the corporate organization codes with the corporate organization names is not stored therein, and also in a case where the corporate organization names included in said document are stored in the master attribute information but a combination of the corporate organization codes with the

corporate organization names is not stored therein; and

said rewriting section rewrites corporate organization names in said document when it is determined by said determination section that the attribute information include in said document conflicts with the master attribute information because the corporate organization codes included in said document are stored in the master attribute information but a combination of the corporate organization codes with the corporate organization names is not stored therein, and rewrites corporate organization codes in said document when it is determined by the determination section that the attribute information included in said document conflicts with the master attribute information because the corporate organization names included in said document are stored in the master information but a combination of the corporate organization codes with the corporate organization names is not stored therein.

3. (as THREE TIMES AMENDED) A document management apparatus according to claim 2, wherein each document is correlated to job information;

a second information management device maintaining second master attribute information, in which a corporate organization code or a corporate organization name can be retrieved using job information, is connected to the communication network; said document managing apparatus further comprising:

a retrieving section retrieving, for each document stored in the document storage section, a corporate organization code or a corporate organization name correlated to job information of the document from the second master attribute information maintained by said second information management device through said communication section; and

a second rewriting section rewriting contents of said document, when a combination of the corporate organization code with the corporate organization name retrieved by said retrieving section does not coincide with the combination of the corporate organization code with the corporate organization name included in said document.

4. (as ONCE AMENDED) A document management apparatus according to claim 1 further comprising an electronic mail outputting section outputting, when a document is rewritten, an electronic mail to notify changing of an attribute information in the document to each department identified by the attribute information included in with rewritten document.

5. (as ONCE AMENDED) A document management apparatus according to claim 2 further comprising an electronic mail outputting section outputting, when a document is rewritten,

an electronic mail to notify changing of attribute information in the document to each department identified by the attribute information included in the rewritten document.

6. (as ONCE AMENDED) A document management apparatus according to claim 3 further comprising an electronic mail outputting section outputting, when a document is rewritten, an electronic mail to notify changing of attribute information in the document to each department identified by the attribute information included in the rewritten document.

7. (FIVE TIMES AMENDED) A computer-readable recording medium with a computer program recorded therein causing a computer having a communication section function as a document management apparatus managing electronic documents used/produced when performing jobs by being connected to an information management device maintaining master attribute information for a plurality types of attribute information included in said documents through a communication network, the attribute information relating to distribution targets of each document for the jobs, said apparatus comprising:

a document storage section storing said documents;

a determination section determining for each document stored in said document storage section by reading out the master attribute information maintained by said information management device through said communication section whether the attribute information included in the document conflicts with the master attribute information to manage the distribution targets of the documents; and

a rewriting section rewriting any of the attribute information included in the document when said determination section determines that the attribute information conflicts with the master attribute information.

8. (TWICE AMENDED) A computer system in communication with an information management system and managing document distribution, comprising:

a processor storing in a storage unit documents and job attribute information of the documents to manage distribution targets [to which]of the documents [are distributed], retrieving master job attribute information of the documents from the information management system, determining whether the job attribute information of each document conflicts with the master job attribute information, and updating the job attribute information of each document when determined that the job attribute information of each document conflicts with the master job attribute information.

9. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) A system to manage electronic documents used/produced when performing jobs, comprising:

servers connected to a network and storing master attribute information relating to distribution targets of each document for jobs to be performed; and

a processor in communication with the servers via the network and storing in a storage unit electronic documents used/produced when performing the jobs and storing attribute information of the documents to manage distribution targets [to which] of the documents [are distributed], retrieving the master attribute information of the documents from the servers, and updating the attribute information of each document responsive to a conflict between the attribute information of each document and the master attribute information.